United Nations

Press Release

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council, in one meeting, approves plans submitted by Secretary-General and Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency for future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraqi compliance with resolution 687 (1991); holds second meeting on situation in Cyprus.

- General Assembly strongly condemns attempted illegal replacement of constitutional President of Haiti as well as violation of human rights in that country; appeals to States Members of the United Nations to support efforts of the Organization of American States (OAS) to restore democracy.

- Under-Secretary-General James Jonah appeals to international community to meet $300 million shortfall for Horn of Africa emergency programme.

- General Assembly President urges continued international pressure to free South African political prisoners at fifteenth anniversary meeting held by Special Committee against Apartheid.

- Talks between the Government of El Salvador and representatives of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front, with participation of Secretary-General's Personal Representative, to resume tomorrow in Mexico City.

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The Security Council this evening unanimously approved plans submitted by the Secretary-General and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraqi compliance with resolution 687 (1991), which set the conditions for the cease-fire in the Persian Gulf war.

By the resolution, the Council decided that the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament should continue to render assistance and cooperation to the Director General of the IAEA as may be necessary to coordinate activities under the plans.

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The Council demanded that Iraq meet unconditionally all its obligations under the plans. It further decided to encourage maximum assistance from all Member States to support the Special Commission and the Director General of the IAEA in carrying out their activities under the plans.

In addition, the Council requested its Sanctions Committee and the Director General of the IAEA to develop a mechanism for monitoring any future sales or supplies of weapons of mass destruction by other countries to Iraq. It also requested the Secretary-General and the Director General of the IAEA to report to the Council on the implementation of the plans when requested and at least every six months.

The Council was scheduled to proceed with a second meeting on the situation in Cyprus.

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The General Assembly today strongly condemned the attempted illegal replacement of Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and called on all nations to impose a trade embargo on Haiti, except for humanitarian aid.

It took that action by adopting by consensus a resolution put forward by Honduras on behalf of the Latin and Carribean Group. By the resolution, the Assembly demanded the immediate restoration of the legitimate Government of President Aristide and the full observance of human rights in Haiti. The Assembly also appealed to United Nations Member States to support proposals by the Organization of American States (OAS) to impose an economic embargo in Haiti with the exception of humanitarian goods.

Addressing the Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Honduras to the United Nations, Roberto Flores Bermudez, urged the international community to remain alert to the consequences of the events on the human rights situation in Haiti and the effects on neighbouring countries. He called on the international community to support the efforts of the Organization of American States (OAS) to reinstate President Aristide in office.

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The Security Council held consultations this afternoon to discuss a number of issues, including the situation in Cyprus and the mission to Yugoslavia by the Secretary-General's newly appointed Personal Envoy, Cyrus Vance.

Following consultations, the Council was scheduled to convene in two separate meetings on the situation in Cyprus and on the ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with resolution 687 (1991).

Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, James O.C. Jonah, appealed today to the international community to meet the $300 million shortfall in pledges

for the Special Emergency Programme for the Horn of Africa, which aims to meet the immediate survival needs of over 22.5 million people in that region.

The Pledging Conference convened on 16 September by the Secretary-General produced $110 million in pledges for relief, food and health assistance which was less than 25 per cent of what is urgently required in the United Nations Interagency Consolidated Appeal for the five Horn countries -- the Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Kenya -- from 1 September to 31 December.

Mr. Jonah expressed concern over "donor distraction" away from the emergency in the Horn of Africa to problems in other parts of the world. Noting the "sheer human misery" he had seen during his recent visit to the Sudan and Ethiopia, Mr. Jonah called on the donor community to quickly provide the additional resources required to implement a coordinated United Nations and non-governmental organization emergency programme. The lives of many millions of civilians -- victims of civil strife, drought, inadequate food supply and a decimated health and social services infrastructure -- were dependent on further donor responses.

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The Special Committee against Apartheid today at Headquarters observed the Day of Solidarity with South African Political Prisoners. The Day marks the anniversary of the adoption of a General Assembly resolution in 1963, calling on the South African regime to release unconditionally all persons imprisoned, interned or subjected to other restrictions for their opposition to apartheid. In 1976, the General Assembly had called for the annual observance of this Day.

At a meeting this morning held by the Special Committee, President of the General Assembly Samir S. Shihabi of Saudi Arabia said that the desired goal of freedom and equality for all had not yet been attained. He cited the Secretary-General in his second progress report on the implementation of the Declaration, that there had been delays in taking the requisite measures to create a climate necessary for negotiations "particularly with regard to political prisoners and exiles...". The release, so far, he said, of some political prisoners was certainly a positive step. However, several hundreds of political prisoners continued to languish in apartheid jails.

In a related development, the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations has expressed regret over today's meeting, saying the meeting was unwarranted since "all political prisoners with a legitimate claim to political status ... have been released".

In a letter to the President of the General Assembly, South African Ambassador V.R.W. Steward said South Africa had "gone out of its way to be fair" in its approach to the release of prisoners with the involvement of the African National Congress.

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A United Nations spokesman said today that direct talks between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional would resume tomorrow, 12 October, in Mexico City, with the participation of the Secretary-General's Personal Representative for the Peace Process in Central America, Alvaro de Soto. The agenda for Saturday and further talks were contained in the document "Compressed Negotiations", available as a General Assembly and Security Council document.

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